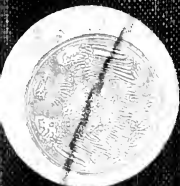


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LA BELLE  
FRANCE

DAVID RYAN 1915



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LA BELLE FRANCE





# LA BELLE FRANCE

BY  
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# LA BELLE FRANCE

## INTRODUCTION

As in the past, the bards of old,  
Chanted their lays of warriors bold,  
Of knightly creeds and ladies' eyes,  
Of prancing steeds and lovers' sighs,  
And noble deeds of high emprise,  
So shall I sing if I have wit,  
Enough, to safely manage it,  
Of this wild war, that foulest race,  
The Teuton, rushing from his place,  
Forced on the world to his disgrace,  
And his undoing, let us say,  
To bring to earth a brighter, fairer day.

War is the father of all things,  
The power of emperors and kings  
Is built upon foundations laid in war,  
On death, distress and havoc widely flung afar,  
And plunderers grow fat because of might,  
While trampled underfoot the right  
Seems crushed to earth, no more to rise,  
And veiled are God's translucent skies,  
By sable war clouds, black impenetrable disguise,  
Hiding the sunlight from our straining eyes.

War is the father of all things!  
In war alone are found the springs  
Whence freedom's life-reviving draught  
Is ever by a nation quaffed,  
Unmixed with tainted streams of craft,  
Which clog our race advancement, while in peace  
We live, and struggle to increase  
Our wealth, by treachery and guile,  
Employing every method vile  
Yet known to man to rob his brother,  
Each robbing each, and each the other.

And now I ask did any nation rise  
Without a war to energize  
Its manhood's valor, till the very skies  
Shone with reflected glory in their eyes?  
Answer, ye pacifists! ye sages wise  
Who prate that justice is your stay  
While to injustice, day by day,  
Your daily lives quiescent tribute pay.  
Who cry for justice, though ye fear  
To stand when tyranny approaches near.  
Who when oppression rears its haughty crest  
Cry, "Peace, O, peace at any price is best."  
War is the only price of peace,  
And only war can bring release  
From monstrous infamy and wrong  
And persecution by the strong.  
For those unable to defend  
Their rights inherent, to the end,  
By means of war, there is no hope,  
Republics, kingdoms, empires, e'en the Holy Pope,  
Must needs submit to foulest wrong,  
Unless their power for war be passing strong

And all their sons be from the cradle taught  
Bravely to stand, as brave men ought,  
Athrill with deeds heroic, noble fathers wrought.

Of lasting peace, war is the only price,  
And great success is purchased but by sacrifice,  
On this dread law is nature based,  
On it is Christ's religion placed,  
Ye cannot win unless somewhat ye lose,  
What would ye win! How will ye choose!  
What will ye win and what will lose!  
War shouts to every nation, "Choose"!

War is the father of all things,  
Of war each mightiest minstrel sings,  
Thus—though not mighty—I presume  
To choose the cannon's sullen boom,  
And bellying war clouds pendent loom,  
And all this universal doom,  
To be a setting for my theme  
Shot through with many a glint and gleam  
From that fair day I see beyond  
The lowering war clouds' utmost frond.  
And from the world at war to-day  
I draw the substance of my lay:  
Choosing the part fair France has played,  
Who by her arms, the Teuton stayed  
First at the Marne, then at the Aisne,  
At Verdun, Alsace and Lorraine,  
And at the Somme and in Champagne,  
In short where'er was met the foe  
The French defensive stood the blow,  
And often to offensive changed  
And all his planning disarranged.

Now all the warlike tales of old  
By bards of ancient lineage told  
Needs must possess a lady fair,  
A queen with charms beyond compare,  
And in their style I e'en will share,  
And I shall garb my metric story  
At times in rhythmic allegory.

My lady fair is "La Belle France"  
Widowed and reft by hateful chance  
Of fathers, brothers, husbands, sons,  
Done to the death by soulless "Huns,"  
    (Who by their crimes, for evermore,  
Are damned and doubly damned to lie  
Beneath a blazing, sulphurous sky,  
Mid tossing waves of quenchless flame,  
    That hissing lash with sullen roar,  
The fiery ocean's farthest shore.)  
Of daughters virginal and pure  
By many a loutish German boor  
Ravished and tortured worse than death,  
Bearing a lifelong shibboleth  
Of gaping wounds, where once their snowy breasts,  
Now shorn away by monsters worse than beasts,  
Gave promise that a race, as yet unborn,  
Might haply live, when freedom's morn  
Should burgeon o'er the stricken world,  
And to the pit, black tyranny be hurled  
Whence to oblivion's depths 'tis quickly swirled.

She who now bears these fearful woes,  
Who torn and trampled by her foes,  
Still lifts her head, proudly to bear  
Sorrows another may not share.

To her whose beauty now is marred  
By hardships far surpassing hard,  
I pay the homage of a bard,  
An humble bard, whose whole desire  
Is that her freedom's sacred fire  
O'erwhelmed in blood, may not, must not, shall not,  
    expire!  
To her I dedicate my verse,  
And to her spoilers fling a curse.

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST

I SING the beauties of La France,  
Her verdancy and fair expanse,  
Of lovely vistas, fresh and fair,  
'Neath skies of rippling summer air  
With peace and plenty everywhere.

I sing of summer-time and flowers,  
Of sunlit days and vernal showers;  
When from the fecund earth the grain,  
Responsive to the sun and rain,  
Ripened its berry but in vain.

I sing of awful change and storm  
And of that misbegotten swarm  
Of demons dire, that rent and tore  
The land of France from shore to shore,  
And still in France they shriek and roar.

I sing of all the world at war  
Though told in rambling metaphor,  
Of tempests, earthquakes, flood and fire,  
Bringing to France destruction dire,  
Wherein her bravest sons expire.



## CANTO FIRST

### SONG OF THE SUMMER

I'm coming, I'm coming, over the sea,  
To stray o'er the meadows, fearless and free.  
My friends are many, my enemies few,  
I'm radiant Summer coming to you.

My feet are dancing over the lea,  
Their touch brings nectar to gladden the bee,  
My magical touch sets the honey flow free.

My feet are dancing in each cold heart,  
'Tis thus I my colorful warmth impart,  
My warmth to each desolate, sorrowing heart.

And ever before me I e'en can hear  
My vassals rejoicing that I am near,  
And this is the song that gladdens my ear.

"Summer is coming, Summer is near,  
Summer the beautiful queen of the year,  
Summer the goddess, who brings us good cheer,  
Bringer of harvest, Summer is here."

'Tis Summer in the land of France,  
Home of the chanson and the dance,  
Whose radiant beauty doth entrance  
The wandering tourist's casual glance,  
Until his heart, responsive, bodies forth romance.  
A land where only joy should dwell,  
Where seemingly no magic spell  
Cast by some sage enchanter, fell,  
Could ever mar her perfect peace,  
Or from the nether world release  
Demons of woe to rend and tear  
Her tranquil bosom now so fair,  
With pain and harrowing despair.  
Yet ah! how soon thou art to feel  
The haughty war lord's trampling, crushing heel.

Bent-headed grain still in the field  
Gives promise of a bounteous yield  
And bids the merry reapers haste  
Lest all the harvest's golden store be waste.

## SONG OF THE REAPERS

WE gather, we gather the yellowing grain,  
Brought forth by the sunshine and bountiful rain,  
We fear not the Winter, so cheerless and cold,  
We've riches in plenty, as yellow as gold.  
Heap high and heap higher the creaking old wain,  
There is plenty to last till we come once again  
To reap the next harvest, with laughter and song,  
While swiftly our sickles sweep smoothly along.

We fear not the threat of the sleet or the snow,  
Nor care though a tempest may ceaselessly blow.  
And loud let it roar, we shall laugh as we sing,  
We have plenty to last 'til it's once again Spring.  
So merrily, cheerily, onward we go,  
Our bright sickles flashing as row after row  
We gather the harvest, and store it away.  
Ah! life for a reaper is happy and gay.

Happy and gay, yes, happy and gay.  
Ah! life for a reaper is happy and gay.

HISTORIC France, how oft thy land  
Has felt the fierce invaders' desolating hand,  
Wasting the harvest, thy exuberant soil  
Yielded so freely to thy people's toil.

First valiant Hannibal and Hasdrubal  
Came out of Spain and swept o'er wondering Gaul,  
Those noble brothers who, by means of war,  
Sought to extinguish the ascending star  
Of Roman glory, ere it fairly rose  
To daunt with splendor all her varied foes  
Who hoped to see the Roman greatness fall,  
Yet vainly hoped, for Rome subdued them all.

Then by the greed of conquest lured,  
O'er Gaul the Roman legions poured,  
By mighty Cæsar bravely led,  
Yet e'er their triumph was assured  
Eight years of warfare they endured  
And floods of Roman gore were shed.

Then came the Germans from the north,  
Tribe after tribe, impetuous, rushing forth,  
Who in resistless fury broke the Roman yoke,  
Though, for the fetters which they broke,  
They brought their own and made the Celt their thrall,  
And for long ages all the land of Gaul

Was trodden down beneath the Germans' heel,  
Till from association and religious zeal  
One race was fused, during that age-long night,  
Forebears of those who now for freedom fight,  
That all the world might live in liberty and light.

Yet e'er the fusing process was complete  
Came Attila, with armies to repeat  
The ancient history of France,  
And in a seeming irresistible advance,  
Like to a flood when breaks the Winter's ice  
Which, so long held it in its chilling vise,  
Ungoverned inundates the adjacent lands  
And nought before its furious surges stands.  
So swept he over Gaul, then backward was he hurled  
By Rome, with her last gasp, to save the world  
From heathenism's paralyzing blight,  
Thus making possible the light  
Of Christian reformation, which, to our regret,  
Has not fulfilled its destiny as yet.

For habits from the barbarous past are strong,  
And for improvement we must struggle long  
'Gainst foes within, as well as foes without,  
While with our vision, limited and hedged about  
By superstition, selfishness and greed,  
We know not how to grasp the Saviour's creed,  
That mutual service rendered man to man,  
In loving brotherhood is God's own plan,  
To raise the nations from their low estate,  
Till from the power of sin emancipate  
All may stand forth forever free,  
A Universe of God-ruled liberty.

Then from the South, o'er France the Moslems came,  
Shouting aloud their boasted prophet's name,  
Wasting the land with fire and sword,  
And when the noble Frankish lord,  
The brave Count Eudes, sought their march to  
stay  
Both he, and all his forces, perished in a day.

And each succeeding battle was the same  
Till, all victorious, unto Tours they came,  
There Charles Martel, "The Hammer," gave them  
pause,  
Who like a lion, fierce for freedom's cause,  
Drove back the Saracens in full retreat,  
And humbled all their glory in defeat.

Now, since that day, the children of La France,  
When hostile hosts, invading, would advance,  
Have with their dauntless courage high  
Upheld their inborn right of Liberty,  
And written large for all the world to see,  
"The land of France forever shall be free."

To tell the list of heroes true and brave,  
Nurtured by France, who dared the very grave  
That none their land of beauty should enslave,  
Would be a task that none could well perform,  
For they are countless as the teeming swarm  
Of sand grains, which the Simoon sweeps along  
The burning desert, as the moaning song  
Of torrid whirlwinds rises high  
The while the driven sand clouds eddying to the  
sky  
Darken the sun as swift the storm draws nigh.

And as the Simoon's fiery, choking blast  
Leaves awful devastation where it passed,  
So unto France there doth appear  
A hurricane of death and fear,  
Which like the sandstorm's wind-blown wave  
Buries its thousands in a common grave.

## SONG OF THE TEMPEST

Ho! Ho! 'tis the voice of the Storm King resounding,  
Exultant, reverberant, re-echoing far,  
From mountain and forest-clad hollow, rebounding,  
Commingling in mighty symphonious jar.  
Fair Summer is stripped of her verdant apparel,  
And nakedly, timidly, cowers from the blast,  
And, wasted, her vineyards and plow-lands lie sterile  
Wherever my ravaging footsteps have passed.

O'er France, land of beauty, my banners are waving,  
Profoundest destruction I leave in my path—  
O'er France, land of plenty, my demons are raving,  
And wasting her substance in pitiless wrath.

'Tis Thor, with the warlocks of Wotan attending,  
While hovering Valkyries, choosing the slain,  
Swirl dizzily onward, ascending, descending,  
And hope to escape them is cherished in vain.

Now o'er the happy land there comes a change,  
Which to the peasant folk is more than strange,  
Their tranquil peace is changed to fear,  
And hurry, scurry, far and near  
All fly alike, from cot, château and grange.

A tempest, yet the sky is clear and blue,  
And nought unusual greets the casual view,  
But all the people show the change.  
Conditions new are always strange,  
And still, as yet, the direful change is new.



A cyclone, mad, careering o'er the sea,  
Lashing to fury all the watery lea,  
    'Whelming all things in ruthless wrath,  
    Brings desolation in its path,  
And frenzied ocean struggles to be free.

A whirlwind, yet without the whirlwind's chill,  
And lo! the sky above is cloudless still,  
    Thunderbolts crashing from the blue,  
    The while their source is hid from view  
As though the tempest crouched behind a hill.

Great hail, that through the quiet Summer air  
Plunges to earth and strips the herbage bare,  
    Killing the verdure as with frost,  
    Till Summer's verdancy is lost,  
And all is desert where the landscape fair

Once charmed beholders with the lovely view  
Of nature, garbed in ever-varying hue,  
    Fair Summer gives the happy land  
    Where peace and plenty, hand in hand,  
Merrily dance the languorous season through.

And now, behold! the earthquake's ragged track,  
Where seamed and lanced and gashed by many a crack  
    The earth is torn as though a plow  
    Of size titanic had but now  
Furrowed the ground, and no one smoothed it back.

And now, a flood resistless sweeps along,  
Drowning alike the weakling and the strong,  
    And all its waves are fraught with death,  
    And all these waves and fetid breath  
Engulf the world in treachery and wrong.

And lo! a fire, yet burning without fuel,  
Defying every scientific rule,  
And where peace flourished ere it came,  
Transmuted by its hellish flame,  
Now all the world is merciless and cruel.

What is this tempest that without a cloud  
Topples the ancient forest, standing proud,  
And hurtles crashing to their fall  
Its mightiest monarchs, straight and tall,  
Who ne'er before a tempest even bowed?

What yon tornado scourging all the deep,  
Till tortured waters rising in an heap,  
In semblance of a liquid dome  
Of spouting geyser, spurting foam,  
Forth from the bosom of old ocean leap.

And what the whirlwind, hail and earthquake dire,  
The putrid flood and hell-begotten fire,  
What are these miracles and whence,  
And what their true significance,  
Turning the world to one vast funeral pyre?

Now vaporous fog-banks, rising in the North,  
And in the East loom menacing and swarth,  
And now we see the tempest's cloud,  
And now the thunder bellowing loud  
With clamorous roar man's hatred bodies forth.

## THE CARNIVAL OF WAR

THE dogs of war are running free,  
The war wolves' loathsome pack  
Ranges the universal lea and howls upon the track  
Of those who in the quiet home  
Believed that war could never come  
Though o'er their heads the crystal dome turned  
sinister and black.

The dogs of war are bathed in blood,  
The haughty war-lord's host  
A-wallowing in the putrid flood, loudly their murders  
boast

And loud resounds the battle's jar,  
Loudly the echoes fling it far  
And in this carnival of war humanity is lost.

Humanity! at that one word  
The freeman's ever ready sword  
Leaps from its sheath, and in his hand  
It quivers to defend the land,  
Instinct with life, a sentient brand.

Now we've the answer to my metaphor  
Simpler than Loki's trick that cheated Thor.

My miracles are only one,  
As plain as printing in the sun;  
It is the world, the modern world at war.

END OF CANTO FIRST  
[17]

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND

Now once there was a lady fair and she was rich in  
land,

And minstrels praised her beauty rare  
And lovers vied her smiles to share and all besought  
her hand.

Gentle and kind she was to all and each she called  
her friend,

And each, should harm to her befall,  
In forest, field or castle hall, My-Lady would defend.

Now there was one, a robber knight, who hoped her  
land to win,

And where he moved there fell a blight,  
Which filled his bosom with delight, his bosom black  
as sin.

He sought not for My-Lady's hand, nor cared he for  
her smile,

He only hoped to seize her land,  
And so he brought his robber band, a crew of cut-  
throats vile.

They 'sieged her in her castle hall and harried all her  
land,

And ever did their missiles fall,  
And ever battering at the wall, they marvelled it  
could stand.

Her lovers heard My-Lady's plight and answered to  
her call.

But lo! the murderous robber knight,  
With all his crew in armour bright, gave battle to  
them all.

But now there comes a warrior bold a-sailing o'er the  
sea,

A warrior lavish of his gold,  
To save My-Lady's 'leaguered hold and set My-Lady  
free.

And soon the robber knight shall feel the prowess  
of his hand,

Soon shall the warrior's noble zeal,  
With shot and shell and flashing steel, restore My-  
Lady's land.

## CANTO SECOND

LAND whence unnumbered heroes came,  
To die, that freedom's altar flame  
Feeble at best might not expire  
And to the world the sacred fire  
Be lost, forever lost and gone,  
While sunk in night, despairing, hopeless of the dawn,  
The world in endless slavery rolled on.

Again thy sons defend the right,  
Again in freedom's service fight,  
Again win triumphs by their might,  
And fierce invaders put to flight.

Oh! land that mothered Lafayette,  
Do we not feel his spirit yet;  
Who proved his nobleness of heart  
By serving here on freedom's part.

Cheering our infant nation on,  
Till she beheld her freedom's first resplendent dawn,  
None but vile ingrates could forget  
Through him we owe to thee a debt  
Which we have never paid as yet.  
But we will pay! Thy sorely stricken land  
When with thy noble heroes hand in hand,  
We drive the spoilers from thy utmost strand.

We will repay with interest long past due,  
By ridding thee of that rapacious crew  
Of loutish, boorish, brutish Huns,  
Damned ravishers of helpless nuns;  
Who from their sanctuary torn  
Unhelped of Heaven and forlorn,  
Are to the foeman's strongholds borne,  
Where, with their maidenhood is shorn  
Their self-respect and even life  
Beneath the heartless monsters' mutilating knife.

## PRAYER TO THE VIRGIN

THOU holiest of womankind,  
Whose sandals none are fit to bind upon thy blessed  
feet,  
Oh, Mary! Mother of our Lord,  
Bow down thine ear and hear my word, from thy  
celestial seat.  
Look down upon these maids of France,  
Thy maidens! whom the war's mischance  
Has made the prey of German lance,  
And in thy holiness defend  
Thy virgins, who without a friend  
To hearten them or succor lend,  
Perforce the Germans must attend,  
Shower them with blessings from thy hand,  
And "straf" the Germans' "Vaterland."



POOR, hapless one, My Lady fair,  
Bearer of griefs beyond compare,  
We all thy griefs in spirit share,  
And as thou strivest, day by day,  
We for thy restoration pray,  
To one who knows thy every need,  
Who sees the foes' insensate rage,  
And hates such warfare as they wage,  
Who knoweth their rapacious greed  
And how thy helpless people bleed,  
Shall He not blame where blame belongs  
And scourge the Teuton for thy wrongs,  
Binding him with the very thongs  
He sought to bind thy sons withal  
To make of thee his beaten thrall.  
To thee, fair France, I lift my voice,  
Bidding thee in thy pain rejoice.  
Thy martyrdom the whole world knows,  
The whole world feels thy hideous woes  
And nought but loathing for thy foes.

And when in happier days to come  
War's wild and wailing voice is dumb,  
On every lip and every tongue  
Where deeds heroic may be sung  
Thy name shall be in every mouth  
From furthest North to utmost South,  
[ 23 ]

From East and West, where'er men be,  
Rejoicing that the world is free.  
In every land, on every sea,  
All shall unite in praising thee.

And we, first nation to be free,  
Whence hither o'er the fretful sea,  
Thy sons, in days of long ago,  
Led by the valorous Rochambeau,  
Pitted their valor 'gainst our common foe;  
We most of all shall love thy name,  
And in thy glorious new-won fame  
Rejoice far more than any land,  
For now so long linked hand in hand,  
We also share in thine achievements grand.

And ever, while the race endures,  
None shall forget the part was yours  
To crush the Boches at the Marne  
And send them scurrying in alarm  
Like rats, to burrows long prepared  
Along the Aisne, which they had dared  
Construct, ere war had been declared.

And while endures yon dazzling sun,  
Who could forget how at Verdun  
The bravest legions of the Huns  
Were put to flight before thy sons,  
Who, when war's wildest whirlwinds beat,  
Toppled the tempest backward in retreat,  
Broke it and shattered it, 'whelming it in defeat.

Through years of war, 'mid shock on shock,  
Thou hast stood firm, a living rock,

Streaming with blood at every pore  
While war's hate-driven breakers beat  
Swirling about thy mighty feet,  
To tear thee from thy foothold sure,  
And hurl thee headlong from thy base,  
And from thy heritage, a mighty nation's place,  
Drifting alone, forgotten, lost to time, in space.

## SONG OF THE GERMAN SWORD

I'M the sword of the barbarous Vandal,  
The sword of the pitiless Hun,  
My blade is red with the blood I shed  
As I riot from sun to sun.

Though I do but the will of my master,  
Who conquers the world in his might,  
When his "mailed fist" shakes and the whole earth  
quakes  
I scatter the nations in flight.

I am full! I am fat! with the slaughter,  
I spare neither sex nor tongue,  
The men I slay with the maids who pray,  
Sparing neither the old nor young.

I am filled with the blood of all peoples,  
Their cities are heaped with the slain.  
Sweet is the cry as the helpless die,  
Beseeching for mercy in vain.

O THOU, once fairest of the fair,  
Unbowed by sorrow and despair,  
Still art thou strong and unafraid,  
And still thy children undismayed,  
The Teutons' arms have sternly stayed.  
Thy feet still bear thee in thy place,  
Fronting the foeman, face to face,  
Weary and worn, yet full of grace,  
Bleeding and torn to free the human race,  
Firm as a rock unwavering on its base.

Still holding back his savage horde,  
Defying still his flashing sword,  
And the "mailed fist" so long his boast  
Made to affright thy fearless host,  
That all thy precious freedom might be lost.

But they have lost and thou hast won,  
And soon a brighter, fairer sun  
Shall pierce the darkness, which the Hun,  
O'er Europe's happy regions spread,  
Shot through with many a gleam of red,  
Where cities burned and peaceful nations bled.  
Yet ah! how long now seems the night  
Without a torch or guiding light  
To lead our wandering feet aright!  
Yet still for righteousness we fight,  
And with our feeble fingers, groping in the night,  
We seek to find a guiding light,  
Yet fail to find a ray of light  
To guide us in the path that must be right.

## INVOCATION

O God, look down, behold the earth,  
Hopeless, distracted, 'reft of Thee,  
Let us receive the soul's rebirth  
To make us free.

Look down, behold the stricken world,  
Wandering unguided in the night,  
Whence war's wild carnival has swirled,  
And give us light.

From Heaven's pinnacle look down,  
While monarchs tremble in Thy sight,  
Trample to dust the tyrant's crown  
And end the night.

Let not our sorrows be in vain,  
Let not our hope of freedom die,  
Come in Thy holiness to reign,  
Forever nigh.

Come, Blessed Saviour, save our race.  
Man is, without Thee, lost and gone,  
Lost in immensity of space,  
Where shines no dawn.

Come, Holy Saviour, in Thy might,  
O give us faith to build anew.  
As eagles soar in upward flight,  
Our strength renew.

Long have we waited for Thy voice,  
Long have we waited, but in vain.  
No more we sing, no more rejoice,  
Our joy is slain.

Come, Blessed Jesus, bringing joy,  
Lest all be swallowed up in grief.  
Let not fell war the earth destroy,  
But give relief.

Come with Thy hosts of spirits bright,  
Come quickly, Jesus, end our pain,  
And in the majesty of right  
Forever reign.

Now sinks the glory of the Hun,  
As slowly sinks the westering sun,  
His bloody glory only won  
By death, distress and havoc widely flung afar,  
By all the hellish engin'ry of modern war.

And so, La France, my tale is done,  
Of shot and shell and sword and gun,  
And all thy griefs so bravely borne,  
And all the hearts with sorrow torn.

Yet ere I end my rambling lay  
Which in thy praise I sing to-day,  
Cheering thee onward on thy war-worn, weary way,  
Proudly I kiss thy war-worn, weary feet,  
Kneeling, I kiss thy war-torn, bleeding feet,  
Adoring! kiss thy strong, unwavering,  
Steadfast, mighty, naked feet.

END OF CANTO SECOND



## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

A TRAVELER came alone by night,  
And entered in an inn,  
And all was dark where once was bright,  
Without a taper's feeble light,  
Or lamp of horn or tin.

A minstrel sang of Boche and Hun,  
Until the traveler wept,  
But when the singer's tale was done,  
Of shot and shell and sword and gun,  
The traveler would have slept.

But loud the minstrel cried him, "Nay!  
I e'en will sing again,  
But now 'twill be a joyous lay,  
For rôle of prophet I'll essay  
And you'll not hear in vain."

He struck the sinews of his lyre,  
And loud the music swelled,  
Music that burned with living fire,  
Of free-born man's long-sought desire,  
And all the dark dispelled.

Again he struck his lyre with power,  
Till all the heavens rang,  
And from its bosom leaped a shower  
Of sparks, ascending hour by hour,  
The while the minstrel sang.

Then quoth the traveler, "Ne'er before  
Saw I so strange a lyre."  
"'Tis not the lyre, but something more.  
The sparks are thoughts from days of yore  
That kindled freedom's fire."

### CANTO THIRD

Who is the bravest of the brave, the freest of the free,  
Is it not he who dares the grave, for sake of liberty?  
Is it not he who scorns to fly, though foes o'erwhelming  
gather nigh,

But all undaunted stays to die?

And who for him is fitting mate, the fairest of the fair,  
Is it not she, though desolate, who bows not to despair?  
Mother or daughter, wife or maid, who, strong, de-  
termined, unafraid,

Cheers on her loved one's trenchant blade?

And such thy children are, La France,  
Who, when the foeman would advance,  
Shouted with tongues of sounding brass,  
Often with dying tongues, alas,  
Their cry of faith, "They shall not pass!"

All know, and no man needs to tell,  
How, 'neath the murderous shot and shell  
That made thy land an earthly hell,  
Where millions of the bravest fell,  
Thy sons, defiant to the foe,  
Gave back the Teuton blow for blow.

Yet though my warlike tale is done,  
Thy future, France, is not begun,



Thy glorious future, near at hand,  
When, all restored, thy happy land  
Shall burgeon forth in perfect peace,  
And to thy children yield its bountiful increase.

So of the future let me sing,  
When Christ is universal king,  
And all forgotten is thy pain,  
When tyrants never more shall reign,  
To lash the nations with their hate  
And lay their cities desolate.

And of the life-reviving spring,  
Which o'er the winter of thy woes,  
Spread thick upon thee by thy foes,  
More deep and chill than wintry snows,  
Which oft thy very life blood froze.  
Soft zeph'ry air of sweetness blows,  
Breathing of buds and blossoming.

## SONG OF THE SPRING

'Tis the Spring of the future,  
The new era dawning,  
Whose voice o'er the meadowland carols afar,  
Who over the tortured land, gaping and yawning,  
Now heals with new verdure each crater and scar.

'Tis Spring, soft and tender,  
The handmaid of Summer,  
Who comes like a benison wafted from far.  
And birds, bees and butterflies  
Greet the new-comer,  
Who conquers forever the Winter of War.

O list to the voice of the Springtime, outringing!  
O hark to the message her carol is bringing,  
And treasure the message the Springtime is singing.

Winter is vanished, Winter is vanished,  
Back to his lair savage Winter I've banished.  
Wild Winter of War, with his service to Mammon,  
Wild Winter of Want, with its wasting and famine.

Winter is banished, Winter is banished,  
Back to the uttermost pole he has vanished,  
And no more shall he surge o'er the fair land of France,  
With his ravaging footsteps and basilisk glance.

THEN shall thy land, La France, have rest;  
And children nourished at thy breast  
Shall rise and till the fertile field,  
When freedom's sunlight is revealed,  
And war's harsh code has been repealed,  
And evil has been slain, not just concealed.

Then shall the sower sow his seed,  
Unfouled with chaff or smut or weed;  
And all the fallow land be tilled,  
And all the grain be threshed and milled;  
And none be lost because of foreign greed.

And he shall reap what he hath sown,  
And he shall keep what he hath grown,  
And none shall rob him of his store,  
Nor ever waste his substance more.

Full sevenfold thy land shall yield,  
While o'er the fecund harvest field  
Shimmers the harvest moonlight from her silvery shield.

Build ye the wastes, and upward climb  
Out of the pit of present time,  
Out of war's pit to freedom's eminence sublime.  
Build ye the wastes, inhabit cities fair,  
Rise from the pit of sorrow and despair,  
Rise from the pit ye have not digged,  
Shake off the snare ye have not rigged.

Rise, freeman, rise! behold, and see  
The dawn appears, the world is free.

But ye must climb the steepy height  
Would ye behold the holy light  
Of freedom's morrow, beaming bright,  
For still 'tis hidden from the earth,  
Concealed, until that teeming birth  
Of war spawn, hell-engendered brood,  
The Teuton lusting still for blood,  
From his own passions perish in his self-made flood,  
War's direful flood, offspring of sin,  
Sin of a nation, Satan's kin,  
Who sought, because its arm was strong,  
To rule by tyranny and wrong.

Tyranny is the spawn of sin,  
Plunder the filth it fattens in,  
And by the plunderer's vicious creed  
Is nourished every evil deed.

And this is why the earth is red  
With blood her bravest sons have shed,  
And this is why the nations bleed,  
Because black tyranny and greed,  
With ruthless fury, sought to win  
Victorious laurels for a nation's sin.

But toward the future time is rolling on,  
And nearer, nearer glimmers freedom's dawn.  
So climb ye, climb ye, while ye may,  
To greet the brighter, fairer day;  
And as ye scale the upward slope  
I'll cheer ye with a song of hope.

## PSALM OF HOPE

HOPE! where abiding fear shriveled your heart-strings  
sere,

Hope ever drawing near, hope of to-morrow,  
Freedom from war's foul breath, freighted with hate  
and death,  
From war! dread shibboleth, signet of sorrow.

Flocks from the verdant hills, grass lands that no  
man tills,

Nightly, with piping trills, the shepherd musters,  
While in late summer's heat, maidens, with snowy  
feet,  
Treading the vintage sweet, trample the clusters.

No more shall nations mourn, no more war's griefs  
be borne,

No more shall hearts be torn, no more be weeping,  
Then shall your sorrows cease, earth yield her full  
increase,

Then shall ye live in peace, sowing and reaping,

Where waves the furbished sword, where booms the  
cannon's word

Then shall be only heard lowing of cattle.  
None shall inquire, that day, of those who pass that  
way,

"Tell me, good sir, I pray, how goes the battle?"  
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And now, La France, My Lady Fair,  
Lady of charms beyond compare,  
Rise in new beauty from the dust,  
And in the God of freedom trust.  
Rise from the mire, the mire of wasted years,  
Mingled with blood and ah! how many tears.  
Put off thy widow's weeds and know  
'Twas not in vain, the weight of woe  
Crushing thy bosom with a thousand fears.  
Freedom has conquered by thy sacrifice.  
For peace thy sons have paid the only price.  
Thou hast been brave, thou hast been true;  
And now thy youth shalt thou renew,  
When earth because of thee is paradise,  
For in the future all the world shall be  
Stronger and nobler all because of thee.  
Because thy sorrows all have borne,  
Because through thee all hearts are torn,  
Because with thee all welcome freedom's morn.  
But thou art more than free, La France,  
Though pierced and torn and gashed by sword and  
lance,  
While in thy burning cities devils dance,  
For war and death and horrible mischance  
Do but thy glory and immortal fame enhance.

### END OF CANTO THIRD

## FINALE

Now slowly sinks the evening sun,  
And with my little volume done  
Again I sing, in thought, its lay,  
Of night and woe and blood and fray,  
And of the future's fairer day.  
And as the western skyline glows,  
Turning from gold to gorgeous rose,  
I lay aside my magic lyre,  
From whence I struck the sacred fire  
Of free-born man's long-sought desire.

No more its swelling chords shall rise  
Reverb'rant to the very skies,  
Nor from its bosom leap a shower  
Of sparks, ascending hour by hour,  
Instinct with freedom's deathless power.  
No more the wandering minstrel sings,  
No more he plucks the throbbing strings.  
Sundered and broken is his lyre,  
And scattered far its living fire,  
Mayhap to burn, mayhap expire.











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